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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4447
INFO RUEHB/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 5238
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY 5504
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 0680
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 3510
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 4866
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 0794
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL CALCUTTA PRIORITY 2993
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 1437
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 2315
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFSS/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KATHMANDU 000060

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TAGS: PGOV PTER NP

SUBJECT: NEPAL: GON HAS NO PLAN FOR DEALING WITH MAOISTS

REF: KATHMANDU 42

Classified By: CDA Nicholas J. Dean. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

Summary

¶1. (C) Dr. Suresh Chalise, Foreign Policy Advisor to the Prime Minister, told Charge January 10 that the Government of Nepal (GON) had no plan on how to handle the Maoists once they joined the interim parliament. He insisted, however, that Prime Minister Koirala would stand firm and not allow the Maoists into government until arms management had been completed. Chalise spoke of the concessions the GON had made to the Maoists throughout negotiations, and the concessions it was making now regarding the interim constitution and interim parliament. Chalise made clear that he did not know how long the GON could keep the Maoists out of an interim government. The PM's advisor was confident that Koirala would hold the line, agreeing that this was essential to a successful peace process. He told the Charge that the GON could not enforce law and order against the Maoists until after cantonment.

No GON Gameplan

¶2. (C) Dr. Chalise, Foreign Policy Advisor to the Prime Minister, told Charge January 10 that the GON had no plan for dealing with the Maoists once they entered the interim parliament. Charge pushed Chalise to give details regarding what the GON would do once the Maoists entered the interim parliament on January 15 (reftel). Chalise responded that there was "no plan." Chalise was downbeat during the conversation with Charge, complaining about the enormous pressure that had come from the Maoists, other parties in the Seven-Party Alliance (SPA), and civil society for the Prime Minister to allow the interim constitution to be promulgated on January 15. Chalise stated that internal issues within the SPA had caused even more pressure to move quickly on the interim constitution and interim parliament. He was grateful that UN arms management would also commence on January 15, a precondition for promulgation of the interim constitution.

No Shortage of Concessions

¶13. (C) Chalise told the Charge that the GON had made a concession on the interim constitution and interim parliament. Previously, the GON policy was to stand strong on not allowing the promulgation of the interim constitution until arms management was completed, but now the interim constitution would be promulgated as soon as the UN-conducted arms management exercise began on January 15. Chalise complained that the GON had had to give in to the pressure from the Maoists and other SPA parties, averring that the GON had seen little choice in the process and had made concessions to achieve peace.

Maoists Into Government Soon?

¶14. (C) On the issue of the Maoists entering into the interim government, Chalise stated that the Maoists could not enter into the interim government until arms management was complete. When asked by the Charge how the Prime Minister would be able to stand up to the pressure that would undoubtedly come from the Maoists and other parties in the SPA, he responded that the Prime Minister would "remain firm" on this issue. Chalise said at one point in the discussion that arms management could be complete in "a few weeks" only to say later in the discussion that it would be "mid-March" before the process would be finished (upon full UN arms monitor deployment). However, Chalise indicated that he had no idea what to expect once the Maoists entered the interim parliament on January 15. The Maoists would pressure the GON to allow them into the interim government immediately, Chalise said, and threaten street action. The GON would

KATHMANDU 00000060 002 OF 002

resist.

GON Not Ready to Enforce Law and Order

¶15. (C) Repeating the government's policy, Chalise stated that the GON did not plan to enforce law and order against the Maoists until after cantonment for fear of upsetting the peace process. The Charge reiterated the importance of restoring security in the countryside in order to provide a conducive situation for elections. Chalise agreed, but stressed that the GON needed to wait. He said that Maoist Supremo Prachanda was being duplicitous, publicly calling for Village Development Committees and police posts to be restored, but issuing orders for Maoist cadre to obstruct at the local level.

Prime Minister's Health "Better"

¶16. (C) Responding to a query from the Charge about the Prime Minister's health, Chalise said that the PM was doing a bit better. The PM's advisor noted the personal toll that the peace process was taking on the PM, noting at the same time how indispensable Koirala was to a successful outcome.

Comment

¶17. (C) Chalise was grateful for U.S. support leading up to the agreement to promulgate the interim constitution and interim parliament. In particular, he welcomed private and public statements from the U.S. insisting that promulgation must not precede arms management. He asked for such support to continue to help the GON hold the line against pressure to form an interim government quickly. Chalise conveyed his fear that the Prime Minister might soon feel compelled to make a decision about when to form an interim government as pressure mounted from the Maoists, other parties in the SPA, and civil society. At the same time, he made clear that the PM's hard-line stance would continue. We will continue to press the GON to wait until arms management is complete

before allowing the Maoists into the interim government. It is clear that increasing pressure will mount on the GON with each passing day. The U.S. should be prepared for an interim Nepali government including Maoist ministers, possibly within the next few weeks.

DEAN